

WaterWatch

Customer Service Division: 703-248-5071

Web: www.ci.falls-church.va.us

E-Mail: water@ci.falls-church.va.us

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Winter Woes

With winter upon us, so comes the possibility of accumulations of snow and ice covering your water meter. When at all possible, please ensure that your meter lid is free from snow, ice and debris.

Since we currently read most meters manually, the meter readers must remove the lid in order to get the reading. Your assistance is GREATLY appreciated by the meter reading staff!



If we have a severe winter it may be necessary to estimate water bills if actual readings are not obtained due to deep snow or ice. The estimated bill would be based on past usage. Your next scheduled reading would correct any overcharge or undercharge that may have resulted from the estimated billing. We will make every effort to obtain actual readings.

How Does Automated Meter Reading Benefit Me?

As mentioned in an earlier issue of WaterWatch, the City began an exciting project that will convert all customers to an Automated Meter Reading, or AMR system, as it is commonly referred.

Our AMR system uses radio frequency in conjunction with a hand held computer unit to obtain the readings by transmitting your unique account number along with the reading. The meter reader walks or drives by to obtain the readings. This new technology increases billing accuracy since the reading is no longer manually entered, enhances data collection and eliminates the need for the meter reader to enter your yard. Risks for the meter readers, such as dogs, exposure to the elements and occupational hazards are also eliminated. These are just a few of the many benefits. Your account information is safe and secure. The transmitting devices will not interfere with your TV, radio or garage door openers.

The installation of these new meters takes only 20-30 minutes and you do not need to be at home. Your water will be shut off

Remember....

- To make sure that the information on your account is correct, including your name and mailing address and to provide any updates such as a change in your telephone number so that we may contact you in case of an emergency. You can reach us at 703-248-5071.
- Your water meter must be accessible to be read quarterly for residences. Please keep grass and bushes trimmed in the vicinity of the meter and keep the lid free from debris and trash.
- It is important to know where the master valve is in your home in case you experience a major leak. The most common locations in your home are: where the water supply enters your home or near your water heater.
- U.S. Residents use more water than residents of other countries! The average in the U.S. is 50-100 gallons of water daily per person. The top three water uses are: toilet flushing, showers and laundry. Remember, Use Water Wisely!



Utility Billing Customer Service

300 Park Avenue, East Wing, Suite 100
Falls Church, VA 22046

Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00am - 5:00pm
Representatives are available from 8:00am - 5:00pm Monday - Friday.

Main number: 703-248-5071

After Hours Emergencies:

Chain Bridge Pumping Station
703-248-5044
703-248-5214 fax

Bill Payments

(Please do not include correspondence)

City of Falls Church
P.O. Box 37027
Baltimore, MD 21297-3027

On the Web

www.ci.falls-church.va.us

E-Mail: water@ci.falls-church.va.us

while this change takes place. As we move into the larger scale change out program, you will receive notice of the scheduling for your change out. Our staff is easily identifiable wearing City of Falls Church uniforms and photo ID badges at all times.

Electronic Bill Payment Update

We are right on schedule in our plan to offer you the option of having your water bill payment automatically deducted from your checking or savings account! Soon we will conduct testing with our bank and software to ensure a smooth transition for you.

The authorization agreement for ACH Preauthorized Payments will be available on the City of Falls Church Web site by approximately mid January 2005. You will see a reference to this form on the main Web page at www.ci.falls-church.va.us that will direct you to the form. You may download the form from your home, complete and fax or mail to us. It is that easy and completely safe. Specific instructions will be made available on the Web. You will still receive your water bill in the mail at the normal billing time. A message will appear on the bill advising you of the date your account will be debited.



Years of Service

Congratulations to William T. Holt, Chief Meter Reader, for 25 years of service and John Maffett, Field Service Technician, for 30 Years of service with the City this year. We appreciate your dedication and commitment to Falls Church City.



Bill Holt



John Maffett

Both employees strive to meet your service expectations each and every day.

Having a Problem? Let us Know

Please report all problems to a Customer Service representative by calling 703-248-5071 from 8AM-5PM Monday through Friday. Our goal is to provide you with the best service at all times. If your problem is not resolved, please ask to speak to the Customer Service Director.

Use Water Wisely!–

Install a Low-Flow Showerhead

In partnership with the Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments and the region's water suppliers, we encourage you to help the region conserve water through a variety of ways.

Water-Saving Tip #42–Before you lather up, install a low-flow showerhead. They're inexpensive, easy to install, and can save your family more than 500 gallons a week. A low-flow showerhead uses a maximum of 2.5 gallons of water per minute versus a regular showerhead that uses 5.0 gallons of water per minute.



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A family of four using a regular showerhead: 50 gallons x 4 = 200 gallons a day, 14,000 gallons a week. A family of four using a low-flow showerhead: 25 gallons x 4 = 100 gallons a day, 700 gallons a week. That's a savings of 700 gallons a week.